

CLAIMS

1. A method for distributing information to multiple users by a server via a network, the method  
5 comprising the steps of:

transmitting notice information to a destination e-mail address of a registered user whose user information, including a unique user ID and the destination e-mail address, has been stored, the notice information  
10 containing the user ID;

acquiring the user ID of the registered user and transmitting a designated Web page when the registered user clicks a banner area that is displayed on the user terminal by receiving the notice information;

15 transmitting the notice information to the e-mail address of an unregistered user that is specified by the registered user as a forwarding address when a request for forwarding the notice information is made by the registered user via the Web page, the notice information  
20 containing the user ID;

acquiring the user ID of the registered user and transmitting the Web page when the unregistered user clicks a banner area that is displayed on the user terminal by receiving the notice information;

25 issuing a new user ID that is associated with the

user ID of the registered user when a request for registration is made by the unregistered user via the Web page; and

          storing user information including the new user ID  
5 and the forwarding address.

2. A method for distributing information according to claim 1, wherein the notice information transmitted by the server to the registered or unregistered user contains 10 information indicating the location of the Web page and being accompanied by the user ID.

3. A method for distributing information according to claim 1, wherein the notice information transmitted by 15 the server to the forwarding address includes comment data received from the registered user.

4. A method for distributing information according to claim 1, wherein the notice information is transmitted 20 by the server to address(es) selected from multiple forwarding addresses specified by the registered user by eliminating those stored as ones to which notice information cannot be sent.

25       5. A method for distributing information according

to claim 1, wherein the e-mail addresses to which notice information cannot be sent include the e-mail addresses of unregistered users who have sent a notice to the effect that they do not wish to receive the notice information.

5

6. A method for distributing information according to claim 1, wherein the notice information is transmitted via e-mail.

10

7. A server for distributing information to multiple users via a network, the server comprising:  
a user information memory that stores user information including unique user IDs and destination e-mail addresses;

15

a notice information memory that stores notice information to be sent to users;  
a notice information transmitter that transmits the notice information to users;

20 a Web page transmitter that transmits a designated Web page in response to an access by a user; and

a user information controller that controls multiple sets of the user information;

wherein:

25 the notice information transmitter transmits the notice information to the destination e-mail address of a

registered user, the notice information containing the user ID;

when the registered user clicks a banner area that is displayed on the user terminal by receiving the notice 5 information, the Web page transmitter acquires the user ID of the registered user and transmits the Web page;

when a request for forwarding the notice information is made by the registered user via the Web page, the notice information transmitter transmits the notice 10 information to the e-mail address of an unregistered user that is specified by the registered user as a forwarding address, the notice information containing the user ID;

when the unregistered user clicks a banner area that is displayed on the user terminal by receiving the notice 15 information, the Web page transmitter acquires the user ID of the registered user and transmits the Web page; and

when a request for registration is made by the unregistered user via the Web page, the user information controller issues a new user ID that is associated with 20 the user ID of the registered user, and stores user information including the new user ID and the forwarding address.

8. An information distribution program that allows 25 a server to execute the information distribution method of

-27-

claim 1.